

School Breakfast Program

Every school day 7 million children in 70,000 schools start their day with a school breakfast. Breakfast is especially important to ensure that children start the day ready to learn. Meals served in participating schools must meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and other nutrition standards.

Like the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program provides cash reimbursement to help support nonprofit food services in elementary and secondary schools and residential child care institutions. Any child at a participating school may purchase a meal through the School Breakfast Program, and low-income children may qualify for free or reduced-price meals. On an average day only a quarter of the students eating a meal provided under the National School Lunch Program also eat a school breakfast.

Facilitating Program Participation

- ☐ Does your local school offer breakfast?

All public and nonprofit private schools may participate in the School Breakfast Program. Nearly three-quarters of those that offer a lunch also serve breakfast. Some States have passed legislation that requires schools to offer breakfast. Some States and private foundations have provided additional funding for schools to establish a breakfast program.

- ☐ Are your community leaders aware of the importance of the School Breakfast Program?

A hungry child cannot learn and may also disrupt the concentration of other students in the classroom. School breakfasts provide children with a nutritious meal to begin their day.

- ☐ Is your school working to overcome barriers that prevent schools from serving breakfast to children?

You can overcome barriers such as a poor school food service image, the perception that school breakfast is only for low-income households, the difficulty of arranging bus schedules, and lack of time. Some schools have overcome these barriers by using student food preference surveys, developing brochures or public service announcements, using vendor carts or classrooms to serve and eat, and serving breakfast before school or after school begins.



SCHOOL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- ▶ Participate in local school board and PTA/PTO meetings and discuss the importance of the School Breakfast Program.
- ▶ Be a role model for children by eating a nutritious breakfast every day and paying attention to what they eat.
- ▶ Discuss school meals with your children to obtain their insight on the choices and quality of the meals served.

FNS CAN HELP:

- ▶ More information about the School Breakfast Program is available at www.fns.usda.gov/cnd.
- ▶ Check out *Time for Breakfast* on the FNS web site for information on the importance of school breakfast and other useful resources (www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Breakfast).
- ▶ The 5-Star Child Nutrition Task Force in the Midwest Region has created a new resource to help you promote a School Breakfast Program, *School Breakfast Toolkit for First Class Learning*. It is available from the National Food Service Management Institute at 1-800-321-3054.